Postcolonial Theory, Dialect, and Sociolinguistics in the Fictional Worlds of Burgess and Orwell

Honors Research Thesis

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I. Introduction

Although the term "postmodernism" is difficult to define within literary circles, critics generally regard it as referring to literature reflecting the fragmented, industrialized experience of living in the mid twentieth century to the present. It represents the breakdown of the barrier between popular and high culture, in contrast with modernism's obsession with attaining status as "high art." Because postmodern literature is less concerned with holding status as high art, it allows the writer freedom to play with the English language, and for example, to write in dialects both invented and real.[1]

However, much of the postmodern literature that uses dialect is also postcolonial, emerging "out of the experience of colonization."[2] Postcolonial theorists[3] often focus on the use of dialect in literature, but they rarely see dialect as part of the greater postmodern tradition of manipulation of language, text, and literary norms. They focus on the authenticity of dialect and the author's attempt to emulate real-world dialects rather than the creative processes behind their transcription. It is worth noting that other postmodern fictions use nonstandard English invented by the author. Therefore, how should readers interpret dialect literature that does not emerge from the postcolonial context in which it is so often studied, is not concerned with questions of race, empire, or colonialism, and features an entirely fictional lexicon? Two well-known examples of such work include George Orwell's dystopian novel *1984* and Anthony Burgess's novella *A Clockwork Orange. 1984* concerns itself with a futuristic Britain known as "Oceania" where the government holds total control over its citizens' lives, including control over their

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[1] See Fredric Jameson's essay "Postmodernism and Consumer Society" (1988) for a discussion of postmodernism, modernism, and high vs. low art.
[2] Bill Ashcroft, Garreth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, (New York: Routledge, 1989), 2.
[3] See Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin; Ahmad.

language. The devout "Party members" in *1984* write (and sometimes speak) in a condensed English known as "Newspeak."[4] In *A Clockwork Orange*, standard English is the language of power, but "nadsat," a Russian-English hybrid, is the dialect of the violent youth culture the novella's antagonist Alex belongs to.[5] Neither Newspeak nor nadsat is used outside of the fictional dystopian world in which it exists. The existing scholarship concerning the use of nonstandard English in texts, which focuses primarily on the authenticity of dialect, fails to account for Burgess and Orwell's use of nonstandard Englishes.[6]

In this thesis, I propose that the use of nonstandard English in postmodern fiction may serve the functions described in existing postcolonial theory, but serves an additional function as well. Many of the fictional worlds in the postmodern canon are dystopian and cruel, filled with paranoia, terrorism, and totalitarianism. The characters inhabiting the text are frequently exposed to physical and psychological torture, or commit violent acts themselves. Viewing their worlds through dialect allows characters to distance themselves from the realities of their existence. These nonstandard Englishes also serve as reflections of the violence within the texts. Just as atrocities are committed within the stories, the writer butchers the English language, which is an atrocity in itself. Therefore in *1984* and *A Clockwork Orange* the authors use dialect to identify characters and illuminate social and political themes, but also employ it as a plot device to help characters process their experiences and as a symbol of the violence within the works themselves.

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[4] George Orwell, *1984* (New York: Penguin, 1949).
[5] Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1962).
[6] For discussions of the authenticity of and purely social function of dialect, see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (1989); and Patricia Ingham, "Dialect as 'Realism': *Hard Times* and the Industrial Novel," *The Review of English Studies* 37, no. 148 (1986): 518-527.

II. Language, Dialect, and the Vernacular

Defining Dialect

We need to first define dialect before discussing it in literature. Even among linguists, defining "dialect" is a nearly impossible, politically charged endeavor. How small or how large is a dialect? Linguists often consider Black English (BE)[7] as its own dialect of American English. But if American English (AE) is a dialect of Standard Written English (SWE), is BE still a dialect, or does it become a subdialect?[8] On the other hand, if American English is considered a language and not a dialect, then it is distinct from British English, even though the two are mutually intelligible.[9] For our purposes, defining dialect matters because we need to establish that nadsat and Newspeak are linguistic codes comparable to those used in postcolonial literature and other works using authentic dialects.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* posits a very broad and potentially problematic definition of "language," stating that language is "the system of spoken or written communication used by a particular country, people, community, etc., typically consisting of words used within a regular grammatical and syntactic structure."[10] The grossest problem this definition faces is its lack of specificity. According to this definition, a language can be any system of communication shared by a group of people exhibiting some kind of solidarity. Therefore, a language used by teenagers who watch particular television programs and adopt their slang could be considered distinct. Clearly, this definition is far too broad and plays host to a number of potential political issues and anxieties about the legitimacy of a language.

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[7] Also known as Black Standard English (SBE) or Ebonics.
[8] See Coulmas and Wallace.
[9] Additionally, all people have their own distinct ways of speaking, known as idiolects.
[10] "Language, n.," *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. (Online: Oxford University Press, 2012).

The OED's definition of "dialect" is only slightly better. Dialect can be either a "manner of speaking, language, speech; *esp.* a manner of speech peculiar to, or characteristic of, a particular person or class; phraseology, idiom" or

> one of the subordinate forms or varieties of a language arising from local peculiarities of vocabulary, pronunciation, and idiom. (In relation to modern languages usually *spec.* A variety of speech differing from the standard or literary 'language'; a provincial method of speech, as in 'speakers of dialect'.) Also in a wider sense applied to a particular language in its relation to the family of languages to which it belongs.[11]

This definition intersects with the definition of language. Because language is particular to a community under the OED definition, the community in question could easily be a class. However, this first definition of dialect makes one key distinction that the definition of language does not. Language is "a system of spoken or written communication,"[12] but dialect is a "manner of speaking, language, speech."[13] Therefore, according to the OED, language seems to be the *what* of speech whereas dialect is the *how*.

Considering the second OED definition of dialect raises even more potential issues, especially those of class. The OED defines dialect as "subordinate…arising from local peculiarities…a provincial method of speech."[14] Therefore, dialect is an illegitimate, uneducated means of communication, intrinsically inferior to "the standard or literary 'language,'"[15] whatever it may be. This definition falls victim to many of the prejudices against nonstandard English that I will discuss later in this thesis. However, it also illustrates the reasons why postmodernism was necessary for the canonization of dialect literature. Dialect, traditionally

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[11] "Dialect, n.," Ibid.
[12] "Language, .," Ibid.
[13] "Dialect, n.," Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

seen as substandard and "low," could only become a part of literary culture when the distinction between mass and high culture shattered[16].

In contrast to the OED's wordy and contradictory definitions of dialect and language, the discipline of sociolinguistics takes a more mathematical approach. Sociolinguistics attempts to understand why people speak in certain ways. Why, for example, do some immigrants go to lengths to learn a new language, whereas others refuse to, or why would someone who might normally use Black English would switch effortlessly and automatically to Standard English in some situations. According to Florian Coulmas' text *Sociolinguistics*,

> there is no universally accepted basis for distinguishing the terms 'dialect' and 'language,' but it is possible to give both terms a clear meaning by relating them to each other. For instance, the Osaka vernacular is a dialect of Japanese, and the Yorkshire vernacular is a dialect of English. The relationship expressed here is transitive, not symmetric: English is *not* a dialect of the Yorkshire vernacular. A language, L, is conceived as consisting of an assemblage of dialects, D_1-D_n… a dialect identifies the regional background of its users.[17]

Essentially, according to this definition, a language is merely a collection of dialects. Furthermore, Coulmas explains that "language is a dialect with a written norm."[18] This assertion differs from the OED's in that it does not limit dialect to speech, but merely suggests that dialect does not have a codified written form. This does not prohibit dialect from transcription, it only recognizes that dialect in writing has no right or wrong. However, Coulmas' definition ignores the stigma associated with dialect in favor of identifying it as regional.

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[16] Only if we subscribe to Jameson's theories posited in "Postmodernism and Consumer Society." The Harlem Renaissance, for example, arguably integrated literature written in African American dialects into the American literary canon.
[17] Florian Coulmas, *Sociolinguistics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 21.
[18] Ibid., 23.

Kamau Brathwaite, a Carribean poet born in Barbados in 1930, writes in what he considers a "nation language" in order to avoid the stigma associated with dialect. According to Brathwaite, dialect

> carries very perjorative overtones. Dialect is thought of as 'bad English.' Dialect is 'inferior English.' Dialect is the language used when you want to make fun of someone. Caricature speaks in dialect. Dialect has a long history coming from the plantation where people's dignity is distorted through their language and the descriptions which the dialect gave to them.[19]

Therefore, in order to shirk the prejudice and stigma attached to the language he writes in, Brathwaite chooses to dispense with dialect and use the term "nation language" instead. Nation language, he says, is "English which is like a howl, or a shout or a machine-gun or the wind or a wave."[20] According to Dora Ahmad, the editor of a collection of works written in dialect titled *Rotten English*, it is "organic, dynamic, confrontational."[21] Unlike Coulmas, Brathwaite and Ahmad recognize the politics associated with dialect and language, but fail to draw a distinction between the two or establish a genetic relationship, which in the case of this paper must be drawn.

In his essay "Authority and American Usage," David Foster Wallace agrees with Coulmas that English is a collection of various dialects, but takes Coulmas' assertion one step further:

> Fact: There are all sorts of cultural/geographical dialects of American English – Black English, Latino English, Rural Southern, Urban Southern, Standard Upper-Midwest, Maine Yankee, East-Texas Bayou, Boston Blue-Collar, on and on. Everybody knows this. What not everyone knows… is that many of these non-SWE-type dialects have their own highly developed and internally consistent grammars, and that some of these

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[19] Kamau Brathwaite, "History of the Voice," in *Rotten English*, ed. Dora Ahmad (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007), 464-465.
[20] Ibid., 465.
[21] Ahmad, introduction to *Rotten English*, 17.

> dialects' usage norms actually make more linguistic/aesthetic sense than do their Standard counterparts.[22]

Therefore, like Coulmas, Wallace believes that language is inclusive of dialect. All of the different dialects spoken in the United States make up American English. However, he disagrees with Coulmas on one principle. Coulmas posits that dialect does not have an internal norm. Wallace disagrees, recognizing that many dialects are "internally consistent."[23] He does not make the blanket statement that *all* dialects are consistent, nor does he recognize a written norm for these dialects. He merely recognizes that even users of dialect follow syntactic rules, and that therefore their language can be studied in a systematic fashion. Wallace's assertion here is particularly applicable to Orwell's Newspeak, which has a dictionary and very strict rules of usage.

For the purposes of this paper, we must decide on definitions of language and dialect that we can apply to our study of nonstandard English in postmodern literature. Borrowing from Coulmas and Wallace, I will assert that a language is a collection of mutually intelligible dialects, meaning that in order to be considered speakers of the same language, speakers of different dialects must be able to understand each other without any prior knowledge of the other's dialect. A dialect, therefore, is a subdivision of a language with either codified or de facto grammar and syntax that is associated with and used by any group of people exhibiting primary cultural solidarity within the larger language culture.[24] Dialect is not limited to spoken language. It also includes the written word. Although many of the definitions discussed above mention

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[22] David Foster Wallace, "Authority and American Usage," in *Consider the Lobster and Other Essays* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2006), 98.
[23] Ibid.
[24] People exhibiting "primary cultural solidarity" identify themselves firstly and most importantly as members of that particular group. This prohibits the problems that the OED's definition of language encounters, putting limits on how small a dialect can be.

dialect and vernacular as low and subordinate to standard English, I will leave any mention of legitimacy, class, and power out of my definitions. This is because I do not believe that dialect is intrinsically inferior to standard language, but is only *de facto* inferior due to the existing cultural hegemony. I include the existence of codified grammatical structures in my definition because of the internal consistencies apparent in all dialects. Internal consistency itself is one of the key markers of a dialect and helps distinguish regional variants.

Language, Imperialism, and Identity

Throughout history, nations have used language as "a political instrument, means, and proof of power."[25] The rationale behind this is simple. If a government is able to control language, it controls the means of communication and even the thought pathways of its citizens. Therefore, language is not only a tool for domination, but in itself "a dominating power."[26] It can be used to perpetuate the existing cultural hegemony and to create and maintain a class system. In *The Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin write that "[l]anguage becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which conceptions of 'truth,' 'order,' and 'reality' become established."[27] It is a way of bestowing meaning onto experience and worthiness onto culture. Nations have used language both as a tool for subjugation but also as an instrument for creating unity, because "when a national speech is formed, and a national literature is developed, the bonds of a common written tradition and a common culture of mind are added."[28] The power of language is not only

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[25] Kamau Brathwaite, "History of the Voice," *Rotten English*, 454.
[26] Tony Crowley, *Standard English and the Politics of Language* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 74.
[27] Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, 7.
[28] Ibid., 226-227.

expressed in the real world, but is present in dialect literature as well, as will be discussed in Burgess and Orwell later in this thesis. This section discusses examples of the relationships between language, power, and identity in world history, preparing us to examine the same themes in fiction.

The British Empire has a long history of imposing the English language on its colonies. When the British colonized the West Indies, they soon discovered that they needed a workforce. Blacks were the most economical option, so the British imported them to the Caribbean and insisted that they speak English. However, the Blacks brought their native languages with them and refused to give them up entirely. These African languages did not disappear, but rather became submerged languages "of inferiority. Similarly, its speakers were slaves. They were conceived of as inferiors – non-human…"[29] The educational systems of the British West Indies recognized only English, discrediting the African languages and culture even further. In short, the African languages became synonymous with the African people. They were inferior and illegitimate. English was the language of power, spoken by the elite conquistadors.[30]

Just as the British used English as a subjugating tool in the West Indies, they have used it similarly in a place closer to home – Scotland. What is now considered a Scottish accent or Scots dialect was once the Scots language. The Scots language, although still related to English, differs heavily from English in pronunciation and also borrows a significant portion of its vocabulary from Scandinavian origins. Up until the Reformation, Scots was allowed to develop separately from British English. By the fourteenth century, Scots had become the national language of Scotland and continued to develop under the influence of Gaelic, French, Dutch, and English until the sixteenth century.

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[29] Kamau Brathwaite, "History of the Voice," in *Rotten English*, 461.
[30] Ibid.

The Reformation saw the beginning of the decline of the Scots language due to the infiltration of English through religion and a political alliance with England. The Church of Scotland began using the English Geneva Bible and English catechisms, and in 1603, King James IV of Scotland united the Scottish and English Crowns, ruling as James I in London. The unification of parliaments in 1707 meant that Scottish and English politicians worked side by side, and the language barrier began to break down in favor of the preservation of English and the subjugation of Scottish, which quickly became associated with vulgarity:[31]

> Thus the Church with its strong influence over education and domestic life inadvertently forced English into the daily lives of the people, and the politicians, in an effort to conform, adopted English as their spoken and written language. The genteel, educated classes, those aspiring to acceptance in the upper ranks of England and Scotland, also made conscious efforts to remove Scotticisms from their speech and writing. The Edinburgh newspapers of the second half of the eighteenth century contain numerous advertisements for elocution lessons, for public readings of English works to demonstrate the proper pronunciation of English, and for lessons on the art of reading and speaking English which were attended by "ladies and gentlemen of sensibility."[32]

As if the public view of Scots and "Scotticisms" was not negative enough, schools began reinforcing the vulgarity of Scots and the preeminence of English. Textbooks were published "on the presumption that there was only one way to pronounce each word of the English vocabulary… all variations being vulgar and incorrect."[33] As a result, English became the marker of a good education, and "the educated middle and upper classes of eighteenth century Scotland, then, made a conscious effort to rid themselves of what they considered to be the burden of their national language."[34]

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[31] T.C. Richardson, "Scottish Dialect and Literature: The Role of Schools," *The Clearing House* 51 no. 9 (1978): 454-457.
[32] Ibid., 454.
[33] Ibid., 454-455.
[34] Ibid., 455.

However, even though many Scottish people dispensed of the Scots language and dialect, the Scots language is gradually becoming more accepted as an academic pursuit. Prejudice against the Scots dialect is gradually waning in schools, and many people see the use of Scots as "a means of awakening the Scottish people to their own culture."[35] Thus, "[i]dentity assertion by choice of [linguistic] variety, especially by a disadvantaged group, is often an act of defiance" and an attempt to proudly set one's self apart from the cultural hegemony despite the possible consequences that could ensue.[36]

Like Scottish English, the dialects in Orwell and Burgess also carry their share of political baggage. In this case, postcolonial theory and sociolinguistics can partially account for the use of fictional dialects in literature. By using fictional dialects, characters are consciously making choices about their identities and how they wish to be perceived. However, this theory does not account for the author's choice to have his characters use dialect. He could choose for his characters to assert their identity in different ways – through appearance, political affiliation, occupation, and so on. Therefore, the choice to use dialect as a personifying device must be deliberate and not only connected to identity and imperialism.

Dialect and Postcolonial Literary Theory

To recapitulate, postcolonial theory falls short because it cannot explain authors' decisions to create and write in these nonstandard, fictional dialects. Unlike authors of postcolonial literature, Anthony Burgess is not a member of culture he portrays in his novel *A Clockwork Orange*, the nadsat-speaking, violent, youth culture. He is not making a point about a real ethnic group or culture in his novel, in contrast to postcolonial and Scottish writers.

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[35] Richardson, *Scottish Dialect and Literature: The Role of Schools*, 456.
[36] Coulmas, *Sociolinguistcs,* 177.

Postcolonial theory also fails to explain the effect that the use of dialect has on the reading experience. It tends to analyze dialect only in terms of its relationship to the real world.

Newspeak in *1984* and nadsat in *A Clockwork Orange* both fit the definition of dialect I proposed earlier in this paper. I asserted that a dialect is a subdivision of a language with either codified or de facto grammar and syntax that is associated with and used by any group of people exhibiting primary cultural solidarity within the larger language culture. In *1984,* Newspeak is used by Party members, especially particularly devout ones, mostly in writing and sometimes in speech. Devout Party members exhibit what I term "primary cultural solidarity" to each other, placing loyalty to the Party ahead of loyalty to their families.[37] The larger language culture that Newspeak belongs to is standard English, or what Orwell terms "Oldspeak."[38] In *A Clockwork Orange*, Alex and his "droogs" use nadsat and exhibit solidarity to their violent gang over any other group, at least until Alex's imprisonment. In the novel, the authorities use standard English.[39] Therefore, if the fictional languages in these texts match my definition of dialect (as well as the definitions proposed by the OED, David Foster Wallace, and Florian Coulmas), then theory seeking to explain the presence and purpose of dialect in literature should be able to account for its use in Orwell and Burgess' dytopian worlds as well the real worlds presented by postcolonial and Scottish writers. The postcolonial theorists who analyze dialect in literature have failed thus far to recognize dialect's potential as a literary device. In the next chapter of this thesis, I will argue that authors use dialect to identify characters and create the social and political backgrounds of texts but also employ it as a symbol of violence and a plot device to help characters protect themselves from the horrific realities to which they are subjected.

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[37] Children, members of the "Spies," were known to occasionally turn their own parents over to the Thought Police.
[38] Orwell, *1984.*
[39] Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange.*

III. The Horrors of the Postmodern World

"Putting Their Maskies On":[40] Nadsat in *A Clockwork Orange*

Masks are everywhere in Anthony Burgess's 1962 dystopian novella *A Clockwork Orange*. When the novel's antagonist, a fifteen-year old violent "droog" named Alex, commits sinful acts, he and his gang wear masks to conceal their identities. He is obsessed with surface identity, always dressing in "the heighth of fashion,"[41] and constantly commenting on the clothing of others. He and his gang even cover their genetalia with decorative jelly molds for the purposes of protection and fashion. It is only appropriate then that the language Alex and his droogs use, a Russian-English hybrid dubbed "nadsat," serves not only as a social marker, but also as a mask in the text, protecting Burgess' characters from their hostile world. Burgess's choice of Russian as the root of nadsat also has political implications. The novel is firmly rooted in the post-World War II Cold War era. It cleverly speaks out against totalitarianism and the fears of the post-1945 world. Nadsat, with its hidden Russian roots, mirrors the Western world's fears of the subconscious penetration of Soviet ideals. In the following section, I argue that not only does Burgess's use of nadsat in *A Clockwork Orange* reflect the Western fears during the Cold War era and serve as an identity marker for Alex and his droogs; it also functions to help Alex process his experiences and mirrors the violence in the text in its destruction of English words and syntax.

The world Burgess creates in *A Clockwork Orange* is violent, simultaneously anarchist and totalitarian – a theoretical Soviet Britain. The London of *A Clockwork Orange* is scarier and grittier than the London of 1962, while maintaining an uncanny similarity to it that jars and

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[40] Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 24.
[41] Ibid., 4.

discomforts the reader. Alex lives with his "dada and mum in the flats of Municipal Flatblock 18A, between Kingsley Avenue[42] and Wilsonsway,"[43] as might a normal teenager in 1962 London live with his parents in a flat. However, as Alex approaches the door to his building, he sees "one young malchick sprawling and creeching and moaning in the gutter, all cut about lovely" and "a pair of devotchka's neezhnies doubtless rudely wrenched off in the hea of the moment."[44] Therefore, it is both the London the reader knows and an uglier London – it is grittier, dirtier, grimier, and more violent. Perhaps the most striking difference between Burgess's London and the London of 1962 is the violent teen culture in Burgess's novella. Alex and his droogs go to school by day and then spend their nights raping, beating up, and murdering anyone who gets in their way. They are by no means the only teenagers engaging in such violent acts – there is also Billyboy and his gang, and others. Alex explains that "in those days, my brothers, the teaming up was mostly by fours or fives, these being like auto-teams, four being a comfy number for an auto, and six being the outside limit for gang-size. Sometimes gangs would gang up so as to make like malenky armies for big night-war, but mostly it was best to roam in these like small numbers."[45] Alex's statement implies that gangs are the norm for teenagers, so much so that there are standards for their formation.

In *A Clockwork Orange*, the government is equally as violent and despicable as the criminals it attempts to stop, stripping its citizens of their free will. Alex claims that "they of the government and the judges and the schools cannot allow the bad because they cannot allow the self,"[46] a statement that could easily be said about any communist government as well as his

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[42] This street actually exists in present-day London.
[43] Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 35.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid., 18.
[46] Ibid., 44-5.

own. When Alex is sent to prison, his interrogation there is less of a fair trial and more of a torture session. Alex says that "[a police officer] clenched his stinking red rooker and let me have it right in the belly…"[47] and "after that they all had a turn, bouncing me from one to the other like some very weary bloody ball, O my brothers, and fisting me in the yarbles and the rot and the belly and dealing out kicks, and then at last I had to sick up on the floor…"[48] While the anarchist teens in the street might commit violence against each other and undeserving citizens, their punishment is equally violent. The government in *A Clockwork Orange* commits the very crimes that it seeks to eliminate. It is also manipulative and crafty and destroys the free will of its citizens. Of the actions of his government, F. Alexander says,

> recruiting brutal young roughs for the police. Proposing debilitating and will-sapping techniques of conditioning….We've seen it all before…in other countries. The thin end of the wedge. Before we know where we are we shall have the full apparatus of totalitarianism.[49]

Although F. Alexander attempts to force Alex to commit suicide, he is not wrong in his assessment of the totalitarian government. The Ludovico Technique the government imposes on Alex to cure him of his violent tendencies saps him of his free will – his ability to participate in a democratic society. His decisions are made for him, and he becomes incapable of critical thought. The prison charlie sees this, and speaks out against the Ludovico Technique, proclaiming,

> 'Choice… He has no real choice, has he? Self-interest, fear of physical pain, drove him to that grotesque act of self-abasement. Its insincerity was clearly to be seen. He ceases to be a wrongdoer. He ceases also to be a creature capable of moral choice.'[50]

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[47] Ibid., 75.
[48] Ibid., 76.
[49] Ibid., 179.
[50] Ibid., 140.

Through the use of the Ludovico Technique, the government molds Alex into a model citizen, into a clockwork orange, into a robot. He incapacity for choice and intellectual freedom is uncannily reminiscent of the minds of citizens under totalitarian regimes, namely the Soviet Union.

Like the events in the text in which Alex's experiences reflect fears of communism, the Russian-English hybridization of the nadsat language is symptomatic of the fears of a Cold War Britain terrified of the Soviet Union and totalitarianism. Even the characters in *A Clockwork Orange* recognize nadsat as sinister. Dr. Branom describes nadsat as "odd bits of rhyming slang… A bit of gipsy talk, too. But most of the roots are Slav. Propaganda. Subliminal penetration."[51] When he first began to write *A Clockwork Orange*, Burgess used the youth slang of the 1960s. However, he quickly realized that by the time of the book's publication, the slang would be dated and outmoded. The solution was to create a unique slang combining "the two chief political languages of the age."[52] Burgess used his background in Russian to build a vocabulary of around two hundred slang words, filled with double meanings and puns.[53] For example, the nadsat word "horrorshow" means in the text roughly "good, excellent, fantastic." In Russian, the word that would be transcribed as "chorosho" (using a German ch) means "fine, splendid, all right then."[54] The audible similarity between the two is purposeful and creates a wonderful dissonance between the Russian and nadsat meanings and the English literal translation. As if to confirm and mock Western society's fears of brainwashing and the subconscious penetration of communist and totalitarian ideals, the text brainwashes the reader

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[51] Ibid., 129.
[52] Anthony Burgess, "Writing *A Clockwork Orange*," in *A Clockwork Orange* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1962), 133.
[53] Burgess, "Writing *A Clockwork Orange,"* in *A Clockwork Orange*.
[54] Burgess, "The American *A Clockwork Orange*," in *A Clockwork Orange,* 143.

into knowing Russian. Burgess purposefully designed the text so that no glossary would be needed.[55] In the first section of the book, Alex often translates for the reader. For example, when describing his and his droogs' jelly moulds, Alex states that "Pete had a rooker (a hand, that is)… and poor old Dim had a very hound-and-horny one of a clown's litso (face, that is)…"[56] Reviewers noticed Burgess's brainwashing technique, slowly grinding Russian into his readers' minds through nadsat, and agreed that it is effective. Diana Josselson, in her review of *A Clockwork Orange* in the *Kenyon Review*, attested that "mastery [of nadsat] may be said to be simultaneous with exposure."[57] Therefore, the reader becomes fluent in nadsat without even realizing it, and even if he does not know it, understands minimal Russian. The events of the text itself mirror the brainwashing of the reader as the government brainwashes Alex into being "good" and incapable of choice, controlled by the totalitarian state.

The violence Burgess creates in his use of nadsat is emblematic of the violence commited by and against Alex in the novella. Although many critics praised Burgess's use of nadsat, others criticized it or commented on the author's destruction of the English language. For example, the *Times Literary Supplement* claimed that the language of *A Clockwork Orange* was "vicious verbiage" and that "English is being slowly killed by her practitioners."[58] Burgess claimed that many critics believed he had set out "deliberately to murder the language."[59] Another reviewer called nadsat "out-of-this-world gibberish,"[60] and yet another claimed it was "a great strain to read."[61] No doubt much of the opposition to nadsat was a result of its difficulty. In writing *A*

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[55] Burgess, "UK vs. US Editions," in *A Clockwork Orange*.
[56] Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange,* 4.
[57] Josselson, "Review," in *A Clockwork Orange*, 196.
[58] Burgess, "Writing *A Clockwork Orange,"* in *A Clockwork Orange*, 134.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., 133-4.
[61] Ibid., 133.

Clockwork Orange, Anthony Burgess essentially took the English language and ripped it apart on all the right seams, sewing in Russian words and Shakespearean English here and there. Some English words, like hand or face, are gone entirely, replaced by the respective terms "rooker" and "litso." Burgess does not shy away from onomatopoeia – Alex's speech and narration is full of it. Drunks go "blerp blerp,"[62] punches go "whishhhhh,"[63] and Alex's mother cries "owwwww owwwww owwwww" in sorrow.[64] Nearly every kick, hit and punch has an onomatopoeic sound attached to it, making Alex's nadsat sound like a very violent language. As a result, the language itself serves as a symbol of the events of the text. Just as Alex and his government commit atrocities, so did Burgess to the English language, ripping and razrezing and perhaps even going as far as the ultra-violent.

Because of nadsat's Russian influences and distance from English, it functions in the text to temper the violence, both allowing Alex to partake in violent acts without experiencing their horror and later protecting him from the torture the state imposes on his psyche and the beatings administered by his former friends. In the scenes where Alex and his droogs commit unspeakable atrocities, nadsat's presence is especially felt. It veils the full cruelty of their acts. Often, the reader is forced to translate the language or guess at what is actually happening in the text. For example, when Alex and his droogs beat up F. Alexander, Dim is

> going er er and a a a for this veck's dithering rot, crack crack, first left fistie then right, so that our dear old droog the red – red vino on tap and the same in all places, like it's put out by the same big firm – started to pour and spot on the nice clean carpet and the bits of his book that I was still ripping away at, razrez razrez.[65]

[62] Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 16.
[63] Ibid., 70.
[64] Ibid., 85.
[65] Ibid., 26.

Clearly, Dim is punching F. Alexander, who is bleeding copiously, but because of the use of nadsat, Alex is able to emotionally detach from his experience and enjoy the violence he is viewing. By employing standard English and words like face, head, fists, or blood, the language would change Alex's perspective on the scene. Part of this is the dehumanizing quality of nadsat. Because words that specifically denote parts of the human body or feelings are ignored, the object of Dim and Alex's aggression is less human and more material. Similarly, when Alex rapes F. Alexander's wife, he avoids using any words that describe her as a person, preferring nadsat terms that distance her from him, the reader, and humanity:

> So [Dim] did the strong-man on the devotchkka, who was still creech creech creeching away in very horrorshow four-in-a-bar, locking her rookers from the back, while I ripped away at this and that and the other, the others going haw haw haw still, and real good horrorshow groodies they were that then exhibited their pink glazzies, O my brothers, while I untrussed and got ready for the plunge. Plunging, I could slooshy cries of agony and this writer bleeding veck that Georgie and Pete held on to nearly got loose howling bezoomny with the filthiest of slovos that I already knew and others he was making up.[66]

Instead of calling her a woman, Alex uses the nadsat (and Russian) term "devotchka." Instead of crying, sobbing, or howling, she creeches. In addition, the woman's body parts are seen as separate from her body. Her breasts, or "groodies," do not directly belong to her, but possess a life entirely of their own and "[exhibit] their pink glazzies."[67] While raping F. Alexander's wife, Alex avoids any mention of penetrating *her* body and merely refers to the rape as "the plunge."[68] He hears "cries of agony,"[69] but does not attribute them to the woman. He also does not mention sexual pleasure or either party's genetalia. His avoidance of the subject distances him from the horror of the violence he commits because he and the woman seem less human and more animalistic. Their body parts are nonexistent, their sexuality avoided.

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[66] Ibid., 27.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

Other words in nadsat that refer to violent acts serve the same function as the figurative language discussed above. Although rape occurs multiple times in the novella, the word "rape" is never mentioned. Instead, Alex refers to it as the "strong-man" (as when Dim takes his turn raping F. Alexander's wife),[70] or "ultra-violence." For example, when Alex and his droogs find Billyboy and his gang, the latter had been "getting ready to perform something on a weepy young devotchka the had… They'd probably just been doing the dirty slovo part of the act before getting down to a malenky bit of ultra-violence."[71] During the same scene, Alex refers to knives or switchblades as "noshes" or "britvas."[72] When Alex and his droogs go to the mansion to harass the old lady who lives there, instead of hitting her on the head, Alex "cracked her a fine tolchock on the gulliver."[73] The particular phrase removes Alex from guilt – he does not directly hit her, but rather "makes" a hit that happens to land on her head. In addition to gulliver, litso, rooker, and rot, there are other nadsat words used to refer to body parts. "Yarbles" refers to testicles, "groodies" are breasts, and "glazzies" are nipples and also eyes. The generalized result of using nadsat words consistently for different body parts is that Alex and his droogs' violence becomes much less literal as the it is not carried out on true human beings and their body parts, but on objects bearing funny names.

Even after Alex is "cured" and is incapable of committing violent acts, he continues to use nadsat to buffer his experiences. When Alex is sent to prison, he is only fifteen years old. Even though he is a hardened criminal, he still feels fear and discomfort and uses his language to filter his world. For example, he says of his fellow inmates that "there were real oozhassny animal type vecks among them, one with his nose all ate away and his rot open like a big black

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[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 18.
[72] Ibid., 19.
[73] Ibid., 69.

hole, one that was lying on the floor snoring away and all like slime dribbling all the time out of his rot, and one that had like done all cal in his pantalonies."[74] The scene is horrid, especially for an adolescent boy. However, describing it in nadsat makes it easier for Alex to handle. Nadsat becomes of special use to Alex when the government exposes him to the Ludovico technique. Forced to watch horrific films while simultaneously made ill, the only way Alex finds himself able to describe the violence that he sees is through the lens of nadsat. The use of nadsat in passages describing the films is appropriately heavy. In one film, "you were allowed to viddy lewdies being shot against walls, officers giving the orders, and also horrible nagoy plotts left lying in gutters, all like cages of bare ribs and white thin nogas."[75] Inferentially, the film Alex is forced to view is about World War II, probably depicting a scene from a death camp. In fact, many of the films Alex sees are from the war or the Holocaust, a fact that cannot be coincidental. In another film, "there it was again all clear before my glazzies, these Germans prodding like beseeching and weeping Jews – vecks and cheenas and malchicks and devotchkas – into mestos where they would all snuff it of poison gas."[76] Considering the novella's obsession with the subconscious penetration of totalitarian ideals, the films are probably Holocaust-centric because of Burgess's and the British government's obsession with destroying any totalitarian sentiment. Other than the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany is the best example of a twentieth century society carried away with socialism and the state. Burgess wrote *A Clockwork Orange* very much in the shadow of World War II, a fact that is quite apparent in his selection of footage for Alex to watch.

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[74] Ibid., 78.
[75] Ibid., 127.
[76] Ibid., 133.

Sometimes nadsat fails as a buffer between Alex and his world. In addition to describing the films he sees using nadsat, Alex uses it to describe the police brutality he experiences after he leaves prison. When Dim and Billyboy beat him up, he uses barely any pure English to describe their actions. He says that Dim "launched a bolshy tolchock right on my cluve, so that all red red nose-krovvy started to drip drip drip."[77] Eventually, the violence that Dim and Billyboy inflict on Alex becomes too heavy even for nadsat to handle, and Alex opts out of narrating the scene. Instead, he chooses only to describe the sounds he hears, stating that he "will not go into what [Billyboy and Dim] did, but it was all like panting and thudding against this like background of whirring farm engines and the twittwittwittering in the bare or nagoy branches."[78] The scene shows that there is a point where even nadsat cannot serve as a thick enough veil for Alex to deal with the violence against him. Even his method of linguistic protection is not strong enough anymore for him to bear the violence.

Nadsat serves as a strong identity marker for Alex like dialect serves as an identity marker in postcolonial and Scottish fiction and reality. In order to shape his identity, Alex can choose to use standard English when he wishes, a linguistic phenomenon known as "code-switching."[79] When Alex code-switches, it is always in a circumstance where his topic of speech is not violent and often quite polite – thus, the veil of nadsat is unneeded and unwanted, due to its affiliation with violent youth culture. For example, when he wishes to gain entry into F. Alexander's house, Alex says,

> Pardon, madam, most sorry to disturb you, but my friend and me were out for a walk, and my friend has taken bad all of a sudden with a very troublesome turn, and he is out there

[77] Ibid., 168.
[78] Ibid., 169.
[79] Coulmas, *Sociolinguistics.*

> on the road dead out and groaning. Would you have the goodness to let me use your telephone to telephone for an ambulance?[80]

Alex knows that using nadsat would cause F. Alexander's wife to label him as a nadsat, and therefore chooses to use standard English instead so that he can get what he wants – entry into the house and a horrorshow violent evening. In the case of *A Clockwork Orange*, therefore, even though nadsat is a fabricated language not actually used in real life, there are still social implications for its use in the text.

Alex continues to use nadsat up until the end of the novella, suggesting that he is still at odds with the world. In the last few pages, Alex experiences a true change of heart, an ending that originally caused the American publishers to eliminate the last chapter of the book. According to Burgess, the American publisher believed that Americans were tougher than the British and could handle the notion that some human beings are immutably evil. Including the last chapter, Burgess's "book was Kennedyan and accepted the notion of moral progress. What was really wanted was a Nixonian book with no shred of optimism in it."[81] However, working from the British text as Burgess wanted it published, Alex decides that "perhaps I was getting too old for the sort of jeezny I had been leading, brothers" and that he should seek out "a new like chapter beginning."[82] Completely reformed and adverse to the idea of continuing his life of violence, Alex still does not relinquish his use of nadsat. Other characters do. When Alex encounters Pete and his wife, Pete speaks in standard English, and his wife comments on Alex's use of nadsat, saying "[Alex] talks funny, doesn't he?... Did [Pete] used to talk like that too?"[83] However, Alex remains unable to give up his tongue, perhaps still unable to bear to horrors of a

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[80] Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 23-4.
[81] Burgess, "A Clockwork Orange Resucked," in *A Clockwork Orange*, xiii.
[82] Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange,* 210, 212.
[83] Ibid., 208-9.

world that seems so hostile to him, ending the novella with the phrase, "and all that cal,"[84] roughly translated as "and all that shit." Alex may not be the violent youth that he was at the beginning of the novel, but he still uses nadsat to identify himself and create a barrier between himself and the world, a literary function ignored in other existing theory on dialect.

Newspeak in *1984*

Dialect in *1984* serves not only to identify characters as members of particular classes or ideologies, but also serves to differentiate the reader's London from Orwell's, helping to establish the text's setting and build an ideological space in which its events can exist. In *1984*, Orwell presents a world that is in many respects the same world the reader lives in, but exaggerates the themes and trends he saw developing in the post-War II, Cold War era, creating a totalitarian state in perpetual war. Instead of creating a language in which characters actually converse and in which the story is narrated, like nadsat in *A Clockwork Orange*, Orwell created Newspeak. Newspeak is the official language of Oceania, a superstate consisting of the British Isles and America, and is still in transition to status as a lingua franca. Characters in *1984* may occasionally use Newspeak terms, but no one converses solely in the language. Therefore, Newspeak is functionally different within *1984* than nadsat is in *A Clockwork Orange*. Instead of directly masking the horrors and violence of the text with its unintelligibility and density of use, Newspeak functions to differentiate Orwell's London from the readers', to create a philosophical world in which the ideologies of the text can exist, and like dialect in other texts, to identify characters.

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[84] Ibid., 212.

Dialect in *1984* as well as in other dialect and vernacular literatures serves as a social and furthermore an ideological marker. The use of Newspeak, standard English, and Cockney dialect serve to differentiate Party members from proles and Party members from each other. For example, Winston remarks that when Mr. Charrington reveals himself as a member of the Thought Police, his Cockney accent disappears and he speaks in the Queen's English. Charrington uses Cockney to disguise his true social position and ideology.[85] Among Party members, the correct usage of Newspeak differentiates loyalists from those more prone to thoughtcrime, like Winston. Winston's friend Syme remarks to him that "even when you write it you're still thinking in Oldspeak. I've read some of those pieces that you write in the *Times* occasionally. They're good enough, but they're translations. In your heart you'd prefer to stick to Oldspeak, with all its vagueness and its useless shades of meaning."[86] Winston's preference to use Oldspeak reveals his true feelings about his government and his unwillingness to subscribe to its ideas and language. The use of Newspeak is the ultimate marker of orthodoxy in the Party. Even when dialect is not part of the discussion, readers can differentiate Party members and proles based on language. While imprisoned in the Ministry of Love, Winston notices that

> [the] Party prisoners were always silent and terrified, but the ordinary criminals seemed to care nothing for anybody. They yelled insults at the guards, fought back fiercely when their belongings were impounded, wrote obscene words on the floor, ate smuggled food which they produced from mysterious hiding places in their clothes, and even shouted down the telescreen when it tried to restore order.[87]

Both the use and neglect of language mark social groups within the Ministry of Love. Party members, whose language is their ideology, are functionally mute in a situation where their ideology is turned against them. Their language, which is equivalent to their ideology, can no

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[85] Orwell, *1984*.
[86] Orwell, *1984*, 52.
[87] Orwell, *1984*, 226.

longer account for their experience. The proles' Cockney dialect, which is fundamentally subversive, thrives in the Ministry of Love. The dialect is well-suited to express their discontent.

Not only does Newspeak serve as an identity marker, but it also helps create a gap between the Orwellian and 1949 Londons. In his book *The Language of George Orwell*, critic Roger Fowler remarks that

> it is precisely the London of the immediate post-War years: bomb-damaged, grimy, cold, marked by shortages of food (and by synthetic food), of fuel, clothing, and other supplies… by failures in basic services such as electricity. The immediately relevant realism of the atmosphere of *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*'s London would have been instantly obvious to contemporary readers…[88]

And indeed, it is. *1984* was published in 1949, only four years after the end of World War II. Even contemporary readers are not so removed from history that Orwellian London does not somewhat resemble their own, or at least the pictures in their parents' childhood photo albums. Other images in the novel recall not only London, but any other twentieth century city past its prime. There are "vistas of rotting nineteenth century houses, their sides shored up with balks of timber, their windows patched with cardboard and their roofs with corrugated iron, their crazy garden walls sagging…"[89] The general image is one of decay and decadence; a city left behind by the modern era. If Orwellian London resembles post-War London visually, it also resembles it culturally. English is still the lingua franca, the Cockney dialect is still spoken by the lower classes, and even the literature is the same – part of Syme's job is to translate Shakespeare, Byron, and Milton into Newspeak. Even though *1984* was set in what was the future at the time of the book's publication, there is "nothing futuristic"[90] about it. There are no fancy drugs like in *Brave New World*, and Orwell's grandest inventions are not technological but rather concepts

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[88] Roger Fowler, *The Language of George Orwell* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 196.
[89] Orwell, *1984,* 3.
[90] Fowler, *The Language of George Orwell*, 196.

such as *doublethink* and *blackwhite*. Therefore, Newspeak serves a similar function to the setting of *1984* as it does to the novel's characters. It marks the setting's identity and develops the text's social and ideological atmosphere.

Although Orwell's London very much resembles the readers' London, it is also grimier, more violent, and more grotesque. Newspeak helps to differentiate between the two worlds. We will now discuss examples of violence in the novel. Even when characters in *1984* are not committing violent acts against each other or themselves, violence is always on their minds. Roger Fowler argues that violent thoughts are always lurking under the edge of Winston's consciousness. [91] For example, the government of Oceania institutionalizes violent thoughts and hate through events such as the Two Minutes' Hate, during which Winston hallucinates about hurting Julia, imagining "he would flog her to death with a rubber truncheon. He would tie her naked to a stake and shoot her full of arrows like Saint Sebastian. He would ravish her and cut her throat at the moment of climax."[92] Not only does Winston envision hurting other people, but he often imagines others hurting him, or hurting himself – being shot in the back of the head or committing suicide while imprisoned in the Ministry of Love.

In Orwell's London, characters do not only have violent thoughts, but see grotesqueness and violence in everyday life. For example, beauty can only be discovered through the grostesque. Ugliness is ordinary, and nothing is traditionally beautiful. Winston never describes humans, not even Julia, as beautiful. Looking around the canteen at work, Winston sees that "nearly everyone was ugly, and would still have been ugly even if dressed otherwise than in the uniform blue overalls."[93] The men who work at the Ministry are beetle-eyed and scuttle down the

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[91] Fowler, *The Language of George Orwell*.
[92] Orwell, *1984*, 15.
[93] Ibid., 60.

hallways, and even Winston himself is less than handsome – his varicose ulcer flakes and itches. The only thing that Winston finds beautiful is a massive prole woman, whom he finds beautiful less for her physical attributes than for what she represents. He thinks, "her thick arms reaching up for the line, her powerful marelike buttocks protruded, it struck him for the first time that she was beautiful. It had never before occurred to him that the body of a woman of fifty, blown up to monstrous dimensions by childbearing, then hardened, roughed by work till it was coarse in the grain like an overripe turnip, could be beautiful."[94] Winton does not find the woman physically attractive, but rather finds what she symbolizes – hard work, the proletariat, and the working class – to be beautiful. To Winston, she represents the Party's greatest enemy.

Instead of being forbidden or feared, violence in *1984* is encouraged by the government of Oceania to the extent that it is normalized. For example, Winston remarks to himself that "some Eurasian prisoners, guilty of war crimes, were to be hanged in the Park that evening… This happened about once a month, and was a popular spectacle. Children always clamored to be taken to see it."[95] An execution is not a tragedy, but rather a form of popular entertainment. And not only is domestic violence normalized, so is war. Winston "could not definitively remember a time when his country had not been at war…"[96] Although the extent to which war and violence are normalized in Oceania is far greater than the extent of their normalization within 1949 London society, the thought of perpetual war and terror would not have been foreign to the 1949 reader. Second World War had just barely ended, and the Cold War was about to begin. Like the war in Orwell's world, where fighting always occurs "off-camera" except for the occasional air raid, the fighting in the Cold War was invisible and covert. The Brotherhood's book recognizes

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[94] Orwell, *1984*, 219.
[95] Ibid., 23.
[96] Ibid., 32.

this normalization of violence and traces it back to the interwar period and specifically to the Nazi party. O'Brien wrote that "round about 1930, practices which had been long abandoned, in some cases for hundreds of years – imprisonment without trial, the use of war prisoners as slaves, public executions, torture to extract confessions, the use of hostages and the deportation of whole populations – not only became common again, but were tolerated and even defended by people who considered themselves enlightened and progressive."[97] Therefore, the practices of violence and terror that the reader witnesses in *1984* are a consequence of his own world. However, they have been pushed to the extremes. Even O'Brian seems to believe that violence and self-destruction in the name of freedom are "unavoidable."[98] Lastly, physical violence fills Winston's time imprisoned in the Ministry of Love. The violence and torture the state inflicts on him would have been unparalleled with anything in 1949 London society and drive home the excessive brutality of the Orwellian world. Winston is starved, beaten, shocked, as well as tortured psychologically. Although the violence elsewhere in Orwell's novel might recall the violence in the reader's own world, the violence Winston experiences in the Ministry of Love exceeds anything in 1949 London.

The violence in Winston's world is not merely physical, but is also psychological, emotional, and figurative. Throughout the entire novel, Winston is haunted by paranoia. His thoughts are constantly occupied with keeping his face clean of emotion and showing the proper facial expressions at the right times. He is so paranoid about someone reading his diary that he places a speck of dust on the cover to ensure that he will know if anyone finds it. Winston is preoccupied with identifying members of the Thought Police and with thoughts of his impending capture, which he knows will come eventually. He seems to be constantly on edge, manically

[97] Ibid., 205
[98] Ibid., 175.

writing in his diary that "theyll shoot me i dont care theyll shoot me in the back of the neck i dont care down with big brother they always shoot you in the back of the neck i dont care down with big brother."[99] This psychological violence inflicted by the climate created by the despotic Oceania government is intrinsically linked with physical violence. When Winston is imprisoned in the Ministry of Love,

> there were times when his nerve so forsook him that he began shouting for mercy even before the beating began, and the mere sight of a fist drawn back for a blow was enough to make him pour forth a confession of real and imaginary crimes. There were other times when he started out with the resolve of confessing nothing, when every word had to be forced out of him between gasps of pain…[100]

Winston so fears physical violence that he inflicts a form of psychological torture on himself, his fight or flight response activating and causing him to produce innumerable lies if only to escape physical pain.

The government's method of discouraging sex is also a form of emotional and psychological violence. Laws prohibit people from forming meaningful relationships and experiencing true love for one another, trapping them in cycles of hate and betrayal. For example, because Winston did not love his wife Katherine, he felt perpetually unhappy with her and almost attempted to murder her by pushing her off a cliff during a hike. In addition to this emotional and psychological violence, the government commits figurative violence on the human psyche through the destruction of words. When Syme explains what he does as a member of the Ministry of Truth working on perfecting Newspeak, he says, "We're destroying words – scores of them, hundreds of them, every day. We're cutting the language down to the bone."[101]

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[99] Ibid., 19.
[100] Ibid., 241.
[101] Ibid., 51.

In *1984*, language is thought and thought is language.[102] Therefore by destroying words, the government is quite literally destroying thought and feelings, ergot, committing another form of psychological and emotional violence. Newspeak, therefore, serves as both a literal instance of and a symbol of the violence in the text.

Because language and ideology are so intertwined in *1984*, the government of Oceania uses Newspeak as a tool for the proliferation of its violence and ideology, just as governments use dialects in real life. Newspeak is the key to Ingsoc, or English Socialism. The language and the ideas it encompasses allow Ingsoc and its principles to exist and blossom. Language is ideology and ideology is language in Orwell's universe. In fact, they are so intertwined that "the sacred principles of Ingsoc" are "Newspeak, doublethink, and the mutability of the past."[103] In short, Newspeak is exactly what allows Ingsoc to exist, and was "devised to meet the ideological needs of Ingsoc, or English Socialism,"[104] existing for no other purpose. Not only is Newspeak entangled with ideology, other languages are as well. Party members are "forbidden the knowledge of foreign languages,"[105] because a foreign language represents a different alley of thought and therefore holds the potential to dismantle Ingsoc and its principles. Because language is ideology in *1984*, the government is able to use Newspeak to control the actions and thoughts of its citizens. For example, using the principle of *crimestop*, the government prevents its citizens from broaching on the thought of any possibly traitorous or dangerous ideas. Crimestop "means the faculty of stopping short, as though by instinct, at the threshold of any dangerous thought… *Crimestop,* in short, means protective stupidity."[106] *Crimestop* can be

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[102] This concept will be discussed in further detail later in this paper. Hang tight.
[103] Orwell, *1984,* 26.
[104] Ibid., 299.
[105] Ibid., 196.
[106] Ibid., 212.

applied to any variety of thoughts – for example, the idea that the Party did not invent airplanes or thoughts of sexual desire.

Perhaps the best and most salient example of the government using language as a means of control is through the use of *doublethink*:

> To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them, to use logic against logic, to repudiate morality while laying claim to it, to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the guardian of democracy, to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then to draw it back into memory again at the moment when it was needed, and then promptly to forget it again, and above all, to apply the same process to the process itself – that was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word "doublethink" involved the use of doublethink.[107]

Every devout member of Oceania society exercises *doublethink* constantly. It is the core of the government's ability to maintain control over its citizens. *Doublethink* essentially allows the government of Oceania to do whatever it wants, because any inconsistencies in its decisions and beliefs are automatically and easily wiped out with a simple act of forgetting. In other words, it is the use of *doublethink* that allows the government to maintain control. Without *doublethink*, all the Party's lies and violence would be exposed in their true horror, and anarchy would break loose in Oceania. However, because of the principle of *doublethink*, the Party maintains its power. In fact, Newspeak itself is the only centralizing agent of Oceania society. Winston reads in the Brotherhood's book that "Oceania has no capital, and its titular head is a person whose whereabouts nobody knows. Except that English is its chief lingua franca and Newspeak its official language, it is not centralized in any way."[108] Therefore, the power of language in *1984* is multifold. As well as helping define social markers and creating identity like in postcolonial

[107] Ibid., 35.
[108] Ibid., 209.

fictions, Newspeak represents the government's destruction of individual thought and truth, differentiates Orwell's London from the reader's, and allows the philosophical principles of Ingsoc a place to exist.

IV. Conclusion

In both *A Clockwork Orange* and *1984*, nadsat and Newspeak reflect issues of social class, politics, and self-identification, like nonstandard Englishes used in postcolonial and Scottish literature. Alex's use of nadsat serves as a sort of membership card to a violent youth culture and separates him from both the totalitarian government and the rest of society. Through choosing when to use nadsat and when to use standard English, Alex changes the manner in which others perceive him, like sociolinguistic theory posits people do in the real world. In *1984*, Newspeak, standard English, and the Cockney dialect mark Party loyalists, thought criminals, and proles. Not only does language serve as an identifier in these texts, but also serves an important political function – in *A Clockwork Orange* as an instrument of rebellion, and in *1984* as an instrument of state control.

However, a strictly postcolonial analysis of dialect fails to account for other functions of dialect, both fictional and nonfictional, in texts. In *A Clockwork Orange*, dialect certainly serves a political and personal function, but also helps Alex to filter his experiences, allowing him to both commit violent acts without remorse and to process the government's cruelty to him. In *1984,* violence helps to characterize Orwell's dystopic London and establish theoretical and ideological constructs within the text. Finally the mutilation of the English language in the aforementioned works symbolizes the violence contained within them.

In conclusion, existing literary theory on dialect literature, which is principally concerned with the authenticity of dialect and the identities it creates for characters, can only partially explain an author's choice to use dialect in texts not rooted in the postcolonial tradition. In these texts, authors consciously use dialect as an identity marker and political statement, a symbol of violence, a tool for establishing setting and ideology, and as a protective barrier between characters and their worlds.

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